

SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification at page 6, paragraph extending from line 5 through line 24 as follows:

--- In Figure 1A, reference numeral 1 designates a solid, round glass rod cut to lengths with square ends being fed to the rod feed system. Roller guides 2, 3, and 4 support the incoming glass rod and hold it on the center of the rod holding system as the rod is being pushed forward by motor driven roller 6. As shown in Figure 1B and Figures 3-5, the system includes a plurality of feed drives each comprising a drive roller and a pinch roller, each feed drive biasing at least one of the rollers into engagement with the rod 1, so the rod is squeezed between the drive roller and pinch roller. The rod end activates photocells 7, 8, 9 and 10 as it passes by each cell to start timers 11, 12, 13 and 14, respectively. These timers signal air cylinders 23, 24, 25, and 26 in the rod feed system of Figures 1B, 3 and 4 to lift momentarily and sequentially to allow the rod ends to pass through pinch rollers 15, 16, 17 and 18 and drive rollers 19, 20, 21 and 22, so that rod ends will not crack during their passage through them. Figure 4A shows the first pinch roller 15 raised to allow a rod end to pass through it, while pinch roller 16 and drive roller 20 continue ~~continues~~ to drive the lead rod 1. Because only one pinch roller is raised at a time, the remaining rollers will continue to drive both the rods 1 toward the inlet funnel 40. Air cylinders 23, 24, 25 and 26 ~~that~~ are controlled by electric solenoids₁ and air pressure regulators activate the pinch rollers. Pinch and drive rollers are driven by motor 30 through

right angle gear boxes 31. End of rod detector 5 is a photocell that gives an alarm when the end of the glass rod 1 is reached, in order for the next rod to be loaded into the rod holding system. The output voltage of controller 38, which is connected to temperature sensor 32, controls the speed of these rollers. ---